तव कथामृतं तप्तजीवनम्
tava kathāmṛtaṁ tapta-jīvanam

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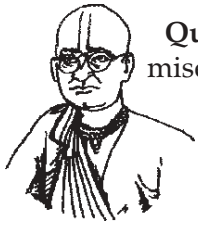
The Purpose of Misery

Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Saraswati Thakur Prabhupada



Question: Why is there so much misery in this world?

Srila Prabhupada: The Supreme Lord is saying, "I have arranged so much misery, so much pain, so much trouble and danger, not to make you suffer, but to teach you that all this misery is unnecessary; so that you will search for the happiness that is eternally desirable, the joy that is eternally adorable.

— Excerpted from *Prabhupada Saraswati Thakur*. Mandala Publishing Group. Eugene, Oregon. 1997.

Monkeys in Vrindavan

His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada

Persons who are indulging in unnecessary sex life in Vrindavan will have to take birth as monkeys in Vrindavan, and then in their next life they will be liberated. The monkeys in Vrindavan are also devotees, but they could not proceed nicely. We should be very, very careful to avoid *dhāma-aparādha*. If you chant Hare Krishna in Vrindavan, the result of such chanting will be increased a thousand times. Similarly, if you commit sinful activity in Vrindavan, then it will be increased a thousand times. So we have to be very careful.

— Lecture on *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam* in Vrindavan, 10 September 1976.

The Form of Krishna

Sri Srimad Gour Govinda Swami Maharaja

(continued from the previous issue)

Three Tattvas

In *Caitanya-caritāmṛta* (20.143) Mahaprabhu has said:

> *veda-śāstre kahe sambandha, abhidheya, prayojana*
> *kṛṣṇa, kṛṣṇa-bhakti, prema — tina mahā-dhana*

In the Vedic literatures, Krishna is the central point of attraction, and his service is our activity. To attain the platform of love of Krishna is life's ultimate goal. Therefore, Krishna, Krishna's service, and love of Krishna are the three great riches of life.

In the Vedas there are three truths — *vede trī-tattva kaya*. They are *sambandha-tattva, abhidheya-tattva,* and *prayojana-tattva*. The *sambandha* is Krishna, the *abhidheya* is *kṛṣṇa-bhakti,* and the *prayojana* is *prema*. *Sambandha* means relationship. There is only one relationship, which is the relationship with Krishna. There is no other relationship.

next column ☞

Krishna is bent in three places, *tri-bhaṅga-lalita*, indicating these three *tattvas*: *sambandha-tattva, abhidheya-tattva,* and *prayojana-tattva*. His first bend, *bhaṅga,* is at the feet. The second bend is in the lips — the left-hand side is bent towards Radharani. And the third bend is in the heart. First are the feet, which represents *sambandha-tattva*, relationship. The presiding deity of *sambandha-tattva* is Madana-mohan, Radha-Madana-mohan. The second bend is in the lips, which is *abhidheya-tattva*, *bhakti*. The presiding deity of *abhidheya-tattva* is Radha-Govinda. And the third bend is in the heart, and that is *prayojana-tattva*, *prema*. The presiding deity of *prayojana-tattva* is Radha-Gopinath. The Vedas give these three invaluable assets — *tina mahā-dhana*. A fortunate *jīva* who gets these invaluable assets becomes rich with *kṛṣṇa-prema* and he will be really happy. Otherwise he cannot get happiness.

Everything you find in this material world is related to Krishna. That is Krishna *sambandha*, the eternal *sambandha*. Bhaktivinode Thakur has said [*Śaraṇāgati* 2.5.2], *sei ta' sambandhe sabe āmār* — the relationship we want to establish is our eternal relationship with Krishna. Here in the material world relationships are temporary, *anitya-sambandha*. These *anitya-sambandhas*, temporary material relationships, only give us misery, unhappiness, and suffering. But if you establish your perfect, eternal relationship with Krishna, then you will be happy. There will be no more misery or unhappiness. This is *sambandha-tattva*.

The *abhidheya* described in the Vedas is *bhakti*. One should achieve that *bhakti*. That *bhakti* is the *kartavya*, duty, of every *jīva*, because every *jīva* has a perfect eternal loving relationship with Krishna. *Bhakti* is the *svarūpa,* the eternal nature, of the living entities — *jīvera 'svarūpa' haya, kṛṣṇera 'nitya-dāsa* [*Cc. madhya* 20.108].

These three words, *bhakta*, *bhakti*, and *bhagavān,* are derived from the verbal root *"bhaj"*. *"Bhaj"* means "to serve". *Bhakta* means servant, servant of Krishna. *Bhakti* means service to Krishna, and Bhagavan means *sevya-vastu*, he whom is to be served. Therefore, *kṛṣṇa-bhakti* is the duty of a *jīva* and *kṛṣṇa-prema* is the *jīva's* only *prayojana,* requirement or goal. Therefore we say, "loving service". When you render service to Krishna it should be loving service, not ordinary service — *prīti-mayī-sevā āra prema-mayī-sevā* [unknown verse]. Otherwise Krishna won't accept it. You should accept that you are an eternal servant of Krishna. Your duty is to render service unto Krishna, and that service should be *prīti-mayī*, it should be loving service. Love is required. That is *prayojana-tattva*, *prema*.

Essence of Supreme Godhead

In the Vedas there are three *tattvas* and three places of Krishna's pastimes, Krishna in Dwarka, Krishna in Mathura, and Krishna in Vrajabhumi. Krishna in Dwarka is complete, Krishna in Mathura is more complete, and Krishna in Vrajabhumi is most complete.

Krishna in Vrajabhumi is *nanda-nandana-kṛṣṇa*, the son of Nanda Maharaja, not *vasudeva-nandana-kṛṣṇa*, the son of Vasudev. The son of Vasudev is known as Vāsudev. It is *yaśodā-nandana-kṛṣṇa*, *nanda-nandana-kṛṣṇa* — the son of Yasoda and Nanda Maharaja — who is eternally *kiśora*. *Kiśora* refers to an eleven or twelve-year-old. This *kiśora* is a cowherd boy, and he is very beautiful. He is *svayaṁ-bhagavān,* the original Personality of Godhead. *Nanda-nandana-kṛṣṇa*, the son of Nanda Maharaja and Yasoda-mata, is the essence of the Supreme Godhead, *bhagavattā-sāra*. All other aspects of Godhead are his portions, his plenary portions, or portions of his portions — *aṁśa* or *kalā*. The *līlā-*, *yuga-*, *puruṣa-*, and *guṇa-avatāras* are all Krishna's *aṁśa* and *kalā*, his portions. But *ete cāṁśa-kalāḥ puṁsaḥ kṛṣṇas tu bhagavān svayam* [*Bhāg.* 1.3.28] — *nanda-nandana-kṛṣṇa*, *yaśodā-nandana-kṛṣṇa*, is *svayaṁ-bhagavān*, the origin of all *avatāras*.

Reservoir of Sweetness

Nanda-nandana kṛṣṇa, *yaśodā-nandana kṛṣṇa*, is *mādhurya-maya, mādhuryaka-nilaya. Mādhuryaka-nilaya* means the reservoir of all *mādhuryas,* all types of sweetness.

Krishna possesses four types of *mādhuryas: rūpa-mādhurya,* the sweetness of his supremely beautiful form; *veṇu-mādhurya,* the sweetness of his flute-playing; *rati-mādhurya,* the sweetness of his loving dealings; and *līlā-mādhurya,* the sweetness of his wonderful pastimes. These four kinds of *mādhurya* are only available with *kiśora-kṛṣṇa*. They are not available in any of his plenary portions or portions of portions, *aṁśa* or *kalā*. Therefore, *kiśora-kṛṣṇa* is *bhagavattā-sāra,* the essence of the Supreme Godhead. For that reason, in *Caitanya-caritāmṛta* Kaviraj Goswami has said, *mādhurya bhagavattā-sāra* — the quintessence of the Supreme Personality of Godhead is *mādhurya* [*Cc. madhya* 21.110]. Do you understand this word *mādhurya*? In English you say sweetness, but it is not sufficient. There is no corresponding word in English. English is a nasty language. Sweetness is not exact — *mādhurya* is the word. It is so sweet.

What is the *rūpa*, the form of *mādhurya-rasa*? That form is *nandan-nandana-kṛsṇa, yaśodā-nandana-kṛṣṇa* in Vrajabhumi. He is *svayaṁ-bhagavān,* the original personality of Godhead. Who can understand that *mādhurya*? Only a *premī-bhakta,* otherwise one cannot understand. Krishna's dealings with the *vrajavāsīs*, the residents of Vrajabhumi, especially the *gopīs,* are very intimate and are based on pure love. In other *svarūpas,* other forms of the Lord, such dealings are not there.

The Flute

In what form does he appear in Vrajabhumi? *gopa-veśa, veṇu-kara, nava-kiśora, naṭa-vara* [*Cc. madhya* 21.101]. That is the beautiful form of *kiśora-kṛṣṇa*. He is a youthful cowherd boy, bent in three places, with a flute in his hand. *Nava-kiśora* means *nitya-kiśora*, always ten or twelve years old. He never grows beyond that. At every moment he appears newer, newer, and newer — *nityaṁ nava-navāya-mānam*. He is never the same and he never becomes old. That *nava-kiśora* form is in Vrajabhumi. And *venu-kara*, he has a flute in hand. This flute is not in Mathura and not in Dwarka. It is only in Vrajabhumi. Prabhupada has written in his purport to *Bhāgavatam* 10.3.31, "the special significance of Krishna bearing a flute in his hands in Vrindavan, Vrajabhumi". Therefore, only Krishna in Vrajabhumi is *mādhuryaka-nilaya*, the reservoir of all *mādhuryas*. You will never find these *mādhuryas* in any other form of Krishna.

One material example may be given. A man may meet some friends or acquaintances on the road. He will appear to them in one particular way. The same man at the office with his co-workers will have another kind of appearance. And in his home, with his own family, wife, and children, he will again have another kind of appearance. The three are different. They are not the same. The form in which he appears at home is *svayam-rūpa*, the original form, and is also *pūrṇa-rūpa*, the complete form. His very intimate dealings are there in the home. You will not find such dealings on the road or in the office.

Similarly, Krishna's *nitya-kiśora* form and his dealings with the residents of Vrajabhumi are very intimate and loving. You cannot find such dealings in Mathura or Dwarka. That form is not there and the dealings are also not there.

Last Limit of Prema

Vraja-prema is the last limit of *prema*, *prema-parākāṣṭhā,* and the form appearing there is *pūrṇa-rūpa*, the most complete form. That form is *svayam-rūpa,* the original form of Krishna. These loving dealings between the *premī-bhakta* and Bhagavan are the mellow of love, *rasa*. In *brahman* you will not find any such mellow of love. In the impersonal *brahman* there is no activity of any *śakti*, *brahma-niḥśaktika*. So there cannot be loving dealings with *brahman*. *Brahmavādīs*, impersonalists, are dry; they have no loving dealings.

There are three types of manifestations of the Lord — *brahman*, *paramātmā,* and *bhagavān* — *brahmeti paramātmeti bhagavān iti śabdyate* [*Bhāg.* 1.2.11]. In *paramātmā* there are only the activities of the *māyā-śakti* and the *jīva-śakti.* There is no activity of the *svarūpa-śakti,* the internal energy. Therefore there are no loving dealings with *paramātmā.* Loving dealings are the activity of the *svarūpa-śakti*. As the *svarūpa-śakti* is absent in *paramātmā,* there are no loving dealings with the *paramātmā.*

Paramātmā only gives everyone their deserved *karma-phala,* the fruits of their activities, in an impartial manner. *Paramātmā* is there as the witness in the heart. He witnesses your activities and impartially gives you the result of your karma — *karma-phala pradāna karuchi*. Therefore *brahman* and *paramātmā* are not *rasa-svarūpa*. They have no mellow. In *brahman* and *paramātmā,* happiness is there. They are *ānanda-svarūpa*, but they are not *rasa-svarūpa,* there is no happiness due to an active relationship. But in *svayaṁ-bhagavān, vrajendra-nandana-kṛṣṇa, mādhuryaka-nilaya-kṛṣṇa*, who is *nitya-kiśora* in Vrajabhumi, there is activity of the *svarūpa-śakti*. The loving dealings of Krishna with the *vrajavāsīs* and the *vrajavāsī's* loving dealings with Krishna are the activities of the *svarūpa-śakti.* This *vraja-prema* is the last limit of *prema*.

A Simple Child

Therefore Krishna is *rasa-svarūpa*. He is served in Vrajabhumi with five chief *rasas* [*Śānta-rasa* was not distributed by Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu. He discarded *śānta-rasa* because it is not satisfying for Krishna. However it is present in Vrajabhumi. Srila Prabhupada writes in *Caitanya-caritāmṛta* (purport to *madhya* 8.294): "... all five mellows — *śānta, dāsya, sakhya, vātsalya* and *mādhurya* — exist eternally in Vrajabhumi."] — *śānta, dāsya, sakhya, vātsalya,* and *mādhurya*. Yogamaya arranges all the pastimes there, thereby both lover and beloved relish *rasa.* There is reciprocation. It is not one-sided. In order to relish that *rasa*, Krishna, the all-knowing Supreme Personality of Godhead, by the influence of Yoga-maya, acts as a simple child. That is *yoga-māyā's* activity. Krishna, who is *viśvambhara*, the maintainer of the unlimited universes, wants to be maintained by his father and mother, Nanda Maharaja and Yasoda-mata. The material brain cannot understand it, but this is *tattva*. Therefore, Yasoda-mata and Nanda Maharaja say, "Oh, he's my son, he's my son, not Bhagavan — *śuddha-vātsalye īśvara-jñāna nāhi tāra*" [*Cc. ādi* 6.56]. Krishna also accepts and acts in that way, thinking, "I will be maintained by My father and mother, Nanda Maharaja and Yasoda-mata." This is *lālya-jñāna*. ❀

— From *Mathura Meets Vrindavan,* chapter three. Gopal Jiu Publications. Bhubaneswar, India. 2003.

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Tolerate Criticism

Mahābhārata, śānti parva 115.1-4

vidvān mūrkha-pragalbhena mṛdus tīkṣṇena bhārata
ākruśyamānaḥ sadasi kathaṁ kuryād arindama

[Yudhisthira inquired,] "What should a learned person who is gentle by nature do when publicly insulted by the harsh words of an arrogant fool?"

śrūyatāṁ pṛthivī-pāla yathaiṣo 'rtho 'nugīyate
sadā sucetāḥ sahate narasyehālpa-cetasaḥ

[Bhishma replied:] "Listen, O King, to how this topic is generally described. In this world a wise man should always be tolerant of an ignorant person"

yad yad brūyād alpamatis tat tad asya sahet sadā
prākṛto hi praśaṁsan vā nindan vā kiṁ kariṣyati
vane kāka ivābuddhir vāśamāno nirarthakam

One should always tolerate whatever a foolish person says. After all, what is the value of praise or blame when uttered by a vulgar fool? Such a person is simply cawing like a crow in the forest" ❀

— Translated by Matsya Avatar Das, from the Gita Press edition. Gorakhpur, India.